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## *SEARCHING the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)*

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NSOPW is the only U.S. government website that links public state, territorial and tribal sex offender registries in [one national search site](#).

NSOPW's advanced search tool provides information about sex offenders through a number of search options:

- Search by name nationally or with an individual Jurisdiction
- Search by address (if provided by Jurisdiction)
- Search by ZIP code
- Search by county (if provided by Jurisdiction)
- Search by city/town (if provided by Jurisdiction)

The search criteria available for searches are limited to what each individual jurisdiction may provide\*. Search results should be verified by visiting the individual jurisdiction's [public registry website](#) for further information and/or guidance. For answers to frequently asked questions about NSOPW, visit the [FAQ page](#).

- Each jurisdiction (State, Territories, or Tribes) has its own laws that determine what information is displayed on its public registry website. Specific sex offender information can be found on a jurisdiction's website.

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### **TO SEARCH**

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Access NSOPW: [www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)

1. Accept the Conditions of Use
2. Complete the CAPTCHA test
3. Search for a name
  - a. If "NO MATCH":
    - i. Make sure that you spelled the applicant's last name correctly. If you are unsure of the spelling of the first name, you can use a first initial in the search box.
    - ii. Registries are helpful tools, but they don't list everyone who has sexually offended. Registries only include people who have been convicted of sex offenses — but might not include all people who have been convicted of sex offenses. Depending on the conviction and the laws of the specific state, tribe, territory or district, not all

offenders have to register, registration lengths vary and not every name on a registry will be made public. Keep in mind that surveys show that most people don't report sexual assault, and many perpetrators are never arrested or convicted. Because of this, it's important to use general precautions and prevention practices in your community. This is why the CA 4-H program uses a variety of screening tools to assess adult volunteer applicants, including criminal records checks, NSOPR searches, confidential surveys, etc.

b. If "TOO MANY MATCHING OFFENDERS. REFINE YOUR SEARCH CRITERIA":

- i. NSOPW will display up to 300 results; this error indicates that the search performed has more than 300 matches.

c. IF "**\_\_\_ JURISDICTION IS NOT AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME**":

- i. **Try again later.** Since NSOPW uses web services to perform real-time searches of the individual jurisdictions' databases, when a jurisdiction has a system or internet connectivity problem, that jurisdiction's database cannot be accessed by NSOPW. These problems are usually fixed quickly and very rarely result in a jurisdiction being unavailable for more than an hour.

d. IF NAME/MULTIPLE NAMES ARE IDENTIFIED:

- i. Search by age
- ii. Verify DOB
- iii. Verify all possible personal identifying information (complete name, alias names, gender, and address) to verify identity.

4. Search Completed

- a. IF NO MATCH: Enter search date into CA 4-H Enrollment System.
- b. IF MATCH: Contact the Custodian of Records in ANR Services and your supervisor for next steps and documentation. Documentation includes adding profile notes in the CA 4-H Enrollment System.